

Message Text

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41

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 PM-04 NSC-05 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 L-03 MC-02 H-02 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /050 W

----- 086686

R 231225Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 142

SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 11718

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SA IR MILI

SUBJ: VISIT OF IRANIAN DEPUTY MINISTER OF WAR

REF: JIDDA 7205(PARA 3)

1. WE HAVE NO INDICATION THAT F-18L WAS "LIKELY" TOPIC OF CONVERSATION, OR EVEN DISCUSSED, DURING VICE MINISTER OF WAR TOUFANIAN'S VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA. CERTAINLY ANYTHING THAT WOULD REDUCE UNIT COST WOULD BE ADVANTAGEOUS TO IRANIANS SHOULD GOI DECIDE TO PURCHASE F-18L AND RECEIVE REQUIRED USG APPROVAL TO DO SO.

2. CODEL RIBICOFF/BAKER (SEN. CULVER) PRESSED TOUFANIAN NOV 16 AS TO WHAT GOI WOULD DO IF US DECIDED NOT TO BUY F-18L. TOUFANIAN MADE CLEAR TO CODEL THAT IRANIAN EXPRESSION OF INTEREST IN F-18L CONDITIONAL. ADDITIONALLY, HE INDICATED THAT IMPRESSION HAD BEEN CONVEYED TO IRAN THAT US NAVY SUPPORTS DEVELOPMENT OF F-18L. IRAN HAS POLICY OF ACQUIRING NEW AIRCRAFT SYSTEMS ONLY AFTER THEY HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY US, TOUFANIAN SAID.

3. WHETHER GOI WOULD PURSUE NEW SYSTEM WHICH US DID NOT INTEND TO ACQUIRE, EVEN WITH ENOUGH OTHER BUYERS TO ENSURE REASONABLE UNIT PRICE, IS IN OUR VIEW MOST DOUBTFUL. THE GOI PREFERS A TOTAL PACKAGE APPROACH INVOLVING TRAINING, CONFIDENTIAL

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SPARES, A SUPPLY LINE, AND USG MANAGEMENT. FOR A SYSTEM

NOT BEING PROCURED BY THE US, AT THE VERY LEAST THIS WOULD
BE DIFFICULT.

4. WITH RESPECT TO WHAT NORTHROP WILL REQUIRE TO GET
F-18L PROJECT OFF THE DRAWING BOARD, WE UNDERSTAND NORTHROP
HERE IS NOW STATING THAT BUY COMMITMENT OF ONLY 250
WOULD BE ADEQUATE TO ENABLE PROJECT TO CONTINUE.
HELMS

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: SmithRJ
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TEHRAN11718
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760435-1217
From: TEHRAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761121/aaaaarhq.tel
Line Count: 69
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 JIDDA 7205
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 JUN 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <22 OCT 2004 by SmithRJ>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT OF IRANIAN DEPUTY MINISTER OF WAR
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, SA, IR, (TOUFANIAN)
To: JIDDA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006